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## Idaho Transportation Department

### Today's News Briefs

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(Montana) Megaload protestors, supporters plan Missoula Co. rallies

MISSOULA, Mont. - The ConocoPhillips megaloads will likely make their way through Missoula early Wednesday before daylight.

Montana Department of Transportation director Jim Lynch said Missoulians won't notice the rigs unless they're awake, but plenty of people plan to be.

"We hope that everybody cooperates with the movers and we get through Missoula in a very short order," Lynch said. "Those who want to stay up and watch it; they're more than welcome to."

Groups opposing the loads have followed them the entire route, recording observations for their legal effort against Exxon/Imperial Oil. No Shipments Missoula member Robbie Liben coordinates Missoula's megaload monitors.

"We'll have monitors out at various points along the road to see, Okay, here's an interesting intersection, will they be able to get by? Will they knock over a light pole? Do we have to run?' You know, things like that," Liben said.

Meanwhile supporters of the megaloads will greet the rigs with smiles. Current and past Lolo-area business owners, like former Lolo Hot Springs owner Don Stoen, plan to line the route in Lolo Tuesday.

"This is just good business that's comin' through here and it's helpin' everybody: the motels and the restaurants, the gas stations," Stoen said. "There's a lot of people getting service from these people."

Opponents, though, aren't giving up. They plan to convene on Reserve Street late Tuesday night, even though they acknowledge, there's no stopping the first two loads.

"Our goal is explicitly not to obstruct the progress of these trucks, 'cause if we're obstructing the progress we're not gathering good data," Liben said.

All Against the Haul campaign coordinator Zack Porter said a group of people will be letting ConocoPhillips know, with signs and megaphones, that the company is unwelcome in Missoula.

"This is our home turf," Porter said. "It's one thing, while these loads are traveling through Idaho, but it's our responsibility now to make sure that we get out and let big oil know that a permanent corridor through Highway 12 and Highway 200, or along I-90 is unacceptable."

Lynch said the megaloads can only move between 12:01-6 a.m., Monday through Saturday, and will only be delayed by weather in Montana.

The Department of Transportation plans to keep Reserve Street open to north and south traffic during that time Wednesday morning, though it may be reduced to a single lane at times.